Weird is our jump-off series for the new school year. Here, we will see that being weird can and is OK! Jesus was weird and he calls us to be weird. In this series we will look at: Being Weird is Good; how to be Weird with our Time, Money, People Pleasing and Life. God doesn't want us to be normal like the world around us; he desires us to be weird. This series will look at how we can build community by being weird as well as how those who don't know Christ can become weird like him!

WEIRD

Week 1: **Being Weird is Good**

Pre Introduction- Being Weird is not generally a sought after feature of the typical Middle School student. Yet, it can't be ignored how utterly weird Jesus and his followers were. They did things differently, they didn't fit the normal model of their day and they did wonderful and amazing things!

Pray

Illustration- Above the Influence | "I Do Me" (can be found on Youtube)

Application- Too often we desire to follow the crowd and are afraid to be different or labeled weird. We allow this desire to be "normal" to keep us from doing things that are abnormal. The girl in the video was not about to allow others to determine who she is. I believe God desires the same from us…to be different and to understand that different is good!!

Transition-

I. Being Weird is Good

Matthew 7:13-14; Luke 13:24; John 6:51

Jesus talked about a wide and narrow road as well as a wide and narrow door. The wide door was the normal worldly people, worrying about normal life. Many people Jesus said go down this road and few find the narrow way, the weird way. Going with the flow, trying to fit in is the dangerous path, while going down the narrow, weird way is better. Jesus says that we should strive to be weird, we should try to be different because the weird way leads to life, not death. The disciples had a hard time with this teaching just as all of us in this room are having a tough time with it now. Jesus said some really WEIRD stuff (John 6:51) and asked his people to do really weird stuff as well. However, these disciples eventually chose the path of the weird and they ended up being used by God to effect the whole world as well as the worlds history!

Application- God desires us to be weird, not trying to be like the world, or trying to maintain the status quo. He wants us to follow him, to know him, to strive to find the narrow gate so we can have life. Jesus promises eternal life for being weird, for seeking his kingdom over your own. The world looks attractive to us, but in the end it all leads to destruction, all of it except Jesus.

Personal Application- It's not easy being weird, or different, some of you may know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, others do not. Jesus wants you to follow him with your life. If you don't know who Jesus is, please get to know him and you can ask any leader or any staff member. If you do, I challenge you to stop seeking the normal things of this world: money, power, popularity, acceptance and find your identity in Jesus. Be weird like Him and ask Him how he can make you weird!

WEIRD

Week 2: **Weird With Time**

Pre Introduction- As we saw last week, being weird is good! How do we get weird like Jesus? What are some of the things he was weird with? Tonight, we will see how Jesus was weird with his time and told others to be weird with their time as well.

Pray

Illustration- A Weird Easter| found on youtube.com (lifechurch.tv)

Application- I believe like the video shows, being weird is what the world needs! Too often we aren't weird enough in the way we live our lives and we neglect to be a part of the world changing that we can be!

Transition- One of the best ways we can be weird is with our time: making the most important things much more important than the semi important things!

II. Weird With Time

Luke 10:38-40;

Too often our lives get sucked away by stupid things. Too many of us waste our lives in front of the TV, watching movies, shows and playing video games. These things can be good, but too much of them can be detrimental to our lives. We miss that the real God of the Universe desires our time. He desires to know us and for us to know him. In the story of Mary and Martha, Mary gets it: life is about knowing Jesus, nothing more. Martha thought it was about pleasing Jesus by serving all the time, but it's all about knowing Him. When we take time out to know God, we will serve when its needed. Nothing is more important than knowing God in our lives. Sports, movies, video games, reading and all of those things can be good, but not to where they take up all of your time and life.

Illustration- Time with my family is important to me. Getting to know my son and my wife are key factors for me, so much so that if I neglect to do this, my marriage and my family will struggle. Taking too much time away from my family for myself, even good things for myself- could spell disaster for my family because I am not investing in them. The same is true with out time with the Lord!

Application- We have got to let go of the things that suck up our time in life. We can't function to our full ability until we get our time weirded out a little bit. Normal time spent doing normal things causes us to miss out on the best and the weird. God desires us to be weird with our time.

Personal Application- Take time to think about where your time goes in a normal day. What in your life do you do that has no real value for life now or eternity? What in your life is good, but is taking away from what is best? My challenge to you is to cut out 5 minutes of all of those things and spend at least 10 minutes in prayer, or reading the Word. Get to Know Jesus, because he desires to know you!

WEIRD

Week 3: **Weird With Money**

Pre Introduction- We've been talking about how to be weird and why being weird is good. Last week we discussed the idea of being weird with our time, making more room for God and less space for the junk we fill our time with. This week, we are talking about being weird with money.

Pray

Illustration- Money by Barrett Strong

Application- This song talks about how the singer just wants money, he doesn't care about people's love, because it can't pay the bills. He sees all the things that money can get and that is what he wants. This guys is focused on money and the acquiring of money that he misses all around him.

Transition- We can be weird with our idea of money. We can be odd balls with how we see money

III. Weird With Money

1 Timothy 6:10; Matthew 6:24

Being "Normal" when it comes to money is making money your god. It invades the commercials we watch, the lives we live and the things we buy. Our culture is so obsessed with money that when the stock market crashed, people committed suicide. Sure money is needed to purchase things we need, but it also a huge tempting factor to get things we don't need. We sometimes will go to great lengths in order to earn money for the things we desire. Being weird with money is asking God how to treat money. Right now, none of you have jobs, but you still want money. Some of you may worship stuff and you just can't seem to get enough stuff. Worship God rather than money, because you can serve two masters. Loving money is the root of all kinds of evil, so be weird, not normal like my uncle.

Illustration- My Uncle Sam is all about money. He truly has loved my grandma (his mom) for her money. Anyone that stands in his way of getting her money is an enemy to be dispatched and removed. His whole life has been about getting and spending money, nothing else. He is only happy when he has money in the bank and a $1,000 suit on his back.

Application- My uncle has wasted his life up til now. We can waste our lives worshiping money and stuff, or we can make our lives count by worshipping God. Greed is part of this loving money thing and most people will do many things to get what they want. Let's put our focus on God rather than money, because even if you don't yet have a relationship with God, He is much better than anything else in this world.

Personal Application- Take a look at how important money is to you. Id it how you define yourself? Does your coolness relate to how much money your parents have? Does your happiness surround the clothes you are wearing or the video games you play? If you answered yes to those, rethink God's importance in your life and seek to put Him above all things. Remember that evil comes from loving money, but good comes from loving God!

WEIRD

Week 4: **Weird With Pleasing People**

Pre Introduction- Being Weird is GOOD! This week we will talk about being weird with pleasing people, because sometimes we care too much what others think of us!

Pray

Illustration- Aladdin and Jasmine where Aladdin lies about who he is.

Application- We care too much what people think of us, so much so that we are willing to lie and cover up our true identity I order to get people to like us. We care if they think we're cool, cute or funny so we attempt to force them to like us this way. Yet, in all truth their opinion doesn't even matter, only God's opinion matters.

Transition-

IV. Weird With Pleasing People

Galatians 1:10

Having others accept us and adore us is a huge piece of life. We desire a place to belong to, we desire people to desire our company and we want people to praise us for being awesome. It's a natural thing to want people to love us and to have everyone happy with us. However, this is not the best for us. Our lives should be focused on pleasing God, so we need to be weird with pleasing people, so weird that we get to the place that we don't care what they think about us, but only care about what God thinks!

Illustration- I can speak to this issue of people pleasing because I myself struggle with it. I find myself often trying to make people happy with me and doing things people ask me to do in order to have them pleased with me. I care so much sometimes what others think that I change who I am and what I am about in order to make them happy. I don't do this as often as I used to by any means, but I still struggle. God has made it clear though that He is the only one that matters. His opinion is the only one that actually counts.

Application- Are you worried about mans thoughts or God's thoughts about you? Who drives the decisions you make, man or God?

Personal Application- So, what do you think? Are you ready to forget about what everyone else thinks about you? Yeah, you may be considered weird, but at the end of the day, you will be pleasing God.
How many of you are wiling to care more about what God thinks than those around you? Raise your hand. I would love to pray for you.
You may be here tonight and you have never considered pleasing God really, but tonight you have realized that you need to make Jesus the leader of your life.

WEIRD

Week 5: **Weird With Life**

Pre Introduction- This is our last week on "Weird" and it has to do with your whole life! Are you going to be weird with life, or the boring "Normal"?

Pray

Illustration- Every year, my family goes to Outer Banks, NC and enjoys the beach there. We soak up the sun, play in the ocean and it is an all around great week. One year, we dubbed my little sister "drift wood" because she could never stay in the same place for very long when she was in the water. The tide was so strong it kept pulling her away and we could rarely find her right away.

Application- Sometimes in our lives, similar to my sister we drift away, not from the shore but from God. We slowly find ourselves slipping away from God, or from wanting God at all. Some of you may have been to church all your life and found weeks, maybe years of interest in God but slowly you drift away from Him, or you've known God and accepted him as your Lord and Savior but God doesn't seem so close anymore and you lose interest in Him.

Transition- How do we stay on track and not become driftwood in our lives? We need to be weird with life!

V. Weird With Life

Hebrews 2:1; Romans 12:1-2

It is easy to drift from God, if we are not paying close attention to our lives and our walk with Jesus. The enemy doesn't want you to desire God or the church. In fact, Satan wants you to desire nothing to do with God and if you feel that way, Satan is winning the battle for your heart. Because drifting is easy, we have to be weird with our lives. We have to be living sacrifices. Our lives need to be surrounded by God. Here are 4 ways to help you stop the drift and get closer to God.

READ THE BIBLE
WORSHIP GOD
GET INVOLVED AT CHURCH
PRAY

Illustration- My mom neglected to stay close to God. She started to drift away from the Lord and her family. Soon her decline was so sharp that she ended up leaving my dad and had two more husbands after him. She drank, smoked and lost her way. Then, she began to come back to the Lord and is now walking in full grace with the Lord!

Application- These principles can and will save your life! My mom saw that her relationship with the Lord was everything and she decided to make her life weird again! Normal is not working, normal is not safe but weird is!

Personal Application- I challenge you to get weird with your life. Don't be normal. Following God and following the 4 paths aren't normal, but they are amazing. Get to know God, read your Bible, Worship Him, get involved at church and pray…it will change your life and make you weird!